The list of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of removal of abnormal infective prion proteins associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopies (TSEs) from an aqueous liquid containing a natural product, which ~~consists essentially of~~ comprises passing the liquid through a depth filter formed of a matrix comprising (a) a binder and (b) kieselguhr or perlite particles or mixtures thereof and having a pore size providing a retention less than 6 μm, and so removing abnormal infective prion proteins which may be present in the liquid such that the liquid is non-infective with respect to prion protein infectivity.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 [[2]], wherein the binder is cellulose.

4-5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, carried out in the absence of cationic or anionic charged material.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1 carried out at a pH in the range 4 to 10.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the pore size is in the range 0.6 to 6 microns.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the pore size is in the range 0.6 to 1.5 microns.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the depth filter has a thickness of 2 to 5 mm.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the natural product is a protein.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the aqueous liquid comprises a blood plasma product derived from human plasma.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein the blood plasma product is selected from the group consisting of albumin, an immunoglobulin, Factor IX, thrombin, fibronectin, fibrinogen, Factor VIII, Factor II, Factor VII, Factor IX, and Factor X.

14. (Previously Presented) A liquid subjected to prion removal according to the method of claim 1.

15. (Previously Presented)) The method according to claim 1, wherein the aqueous liquid comprises an animal-derived product selected from the group consisting of heparin and hormones.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the abnormal infective prion protein is associated with conditions selected from the group consisting of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, bovine spongiform encephalopy and scrapie.

17. (Currently Amended) A method of removing proteins from an aqueous liquid, consisting essentially of passing a protein-containing solution through a filter comprising a matrix comprising (a) a binder and (b) kieselguhr or perlite particles or mixtures thereof and a pore size of not greater than 6 μm, wherein the protein is an abnormal infective prion protein and abnormal infective prion proteins present in the aqueous liquid are removed to the extent that the aqueous liquid is non-infective with respect to prion protein infectivity.

18. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising at least one component subjected to prion removal wherein the at least one component is obtained by a process consisting essentially of passing a protein-containing solution through a filter comprising a matrix comprising (a) a binder and (b) kieselguhr or perlite particles or mixtures thereof and a pore size of not greater than 6 μm, wherein prion proteins contained in the protein-containing solution are removed to the extent that the aqueous liquid is non-infective with respect to prion protein infectivity.

19. (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 18, wherein the composition is selected from the group consisting of food products, beverages, medicinal products and cosmetics.

20-22. (Canceled)

23. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the filter is a single use filter.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein the blood plasma product is selected from the group consisting of immunoglobulins and albumin.

26. (Currently Amended) A method of removal of abnormal infective prion proteins associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopies (TSEs) consisting essentially of passing an aqueous liquid comprising immunoglobulins through a depth filter formed of a matrix comprising (a) a binder and (b) kieselguhr or perlite particles or mixtures thereof and having a pore size providing a retention less than 6 μm, and so removing abnormal infective prion proteins which may be present in the liquid such that removal of the abnormal infective prion proteins from the immunoglobulins is achieved to an extent of at least $10^{2.5}$.

27. (Currently Amended) A method of removal of abnormal infective prion proteins associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopies (TSEs) from an aqueous liquid containing a blood plasma product, wherein the method consists essentially of passing the liquid containing a blood plasma product selected from the group consisting of immunoglobulins and albumin through a depth filter formed of a matrix comprising (a) a binder) and (b) kieselguhr or perlite particles or mixtures thereof and having a pore size providing a retention less than 6 μm, and so removing abnormal infective prion proteins which may be present in the liquid such that the liquid is non-infective with respect to prion protein infectivity.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the filter is pretreated with ethanol.

29. (New) A method of removal of abnormal infective prion proteins associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopies (TSEs) from an aqueous liquid containing a natural product, which comprises passing the liquid through a single-use filter formed of a matrix comprising kieselguhr or perlite particles or mixtures thereof and having a pore size providing a retention less than 6 μm, and so removing abnormal infective prion proteins which may be present in the liquid such that the liquid is non-infective with respect to prion protein infectivity.